

# The Renewed Maldon District Sustainable Community Strategy 2010-2026

Foreword

Vision

Description of the District

How do we know what is important?

Summary of Priority Issues

Priority Issues and Priority Actions

Delivering Our Vision

Sources and Consultations

Contact

## Foreword

Being clear about what the priority issues for the District are is even more important during a time of economic stringency. This document, the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), pulls together the key issues that need to be addressed to improve the quality of life in the Maldon District and forms an overarching strategy for the District.

The Strategy is reviewed regularly and renewed every three years. This time the Strategy's renewal has coincided with a change of government and changes to the structure and funding of the Public Sector who, as key service deliverers and employers, are important players in the District. In a time of rapid change it is imperative to reassess the priority issues for the District and to ensure that those who will be responsible for delivery or overseeing the delivery of services is aware of what is important to the people who live and work here.

The Maldon District Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) brings together organisations operating in the District from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors to identify local needs and work in partnership to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the people of the area. Partnership working will become more important for delivering improvements and, whatever the nature of partnership structures in the future, we hope that this strategy will provide a sound basis on which to move forward.

Cllr Penny Channer - Chairman of the Maldon District Local Strategic Partnership

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## Vision

Our vision remains unchanged from 2008 when the Strategy was last refreshed because it describes the District that the LSP wish to see continue and develop:

A sustainable coastal district, with a rich and distinct rural identity and heritage, underpinned by a vibrant local economy and an active community life.

## Description of the District

The Maldon District on the Essex coast, approximately 60 miles from London, is predominantly rural and covers an area of 36,000 hectares. It wraps around the Blackwater Estuary with the North Sea providing the eastern boundary and the River Crouch the Southern.

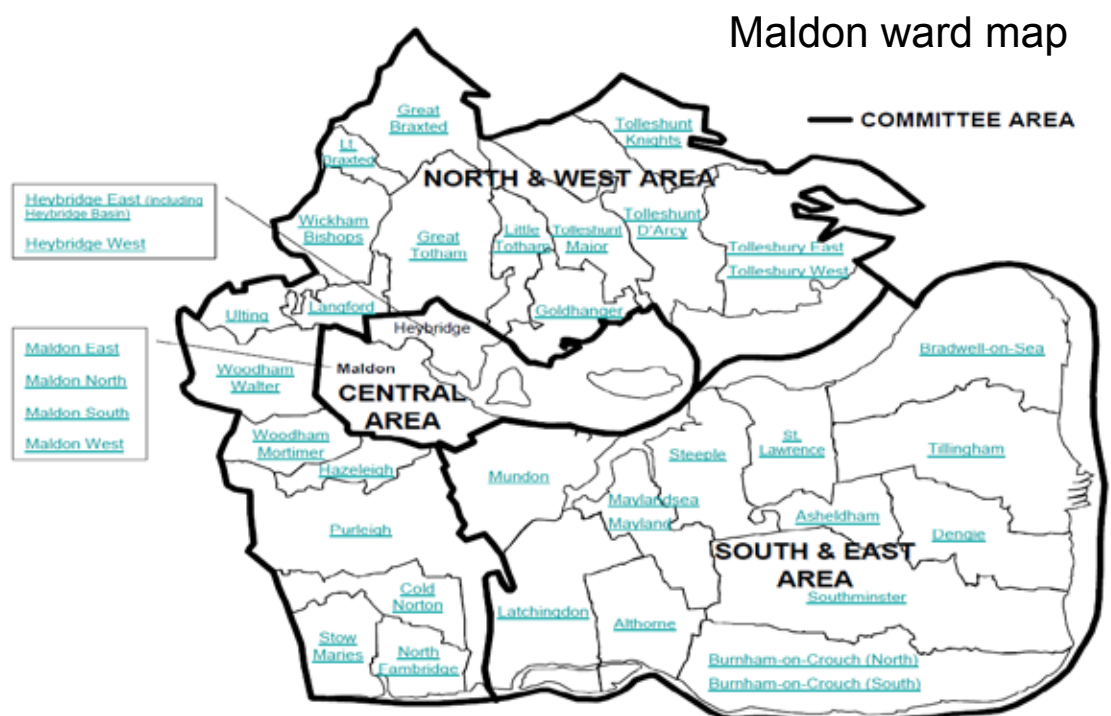
In 2011, Maldon District had a population of 64,400 people. It is the 3rd largest district in Essex but has one of the lowest population densities in Essex at just under 180 residents per sq km. Population is concentrated in the towns of Maldon, Heybridge and Burnham-on-Crouch, with over half of the population living in those towns.

Whilst the District falls outside the designated areas of growth for the East of England, projections from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) indicate that population and the number of households will continue to increase. The population of the District is also ageing. Between 2008 and 2033 the population aged between 65 and 84 is expected to increase by approximately 85%, whilst that over 85 is expected to more than triple. There is also expected to be a decline in the proportion of working age people from more than 60% to just over 50%.

The District has a relatively small Black and Ethnic population (BME) in relation to Essex. The area has the smallest percentage of non-white minority ethnic groups in Essex at around 3% of the population and only two local authority run sites for the travelling community.

Maldon District is ranked as the 5th least deprived of the 12 Essex districts. However, it contains some of the most and least deprived areas in Essex: parts of Maldon East, Maldon North & Heybridge West wards are in the 20% most deprived, while Maldon West is in the 10% least deprived. The predominantly older housing gives the District's private sector housing an average SAP rating only 44 compared to the national average of 50 and 38% of private sector dwellings fail at least one of the decent homes criteria.

The District faces the challenges of addressing the long term issues that have significant impact upon the opportunities and cohesiveness of its communities and coping with the impact of growth in neighbouring areas.



## How do we know what is important?

Surveys, studies and national statistics have helped to build up a picture of the District and to identify the key issues for the District over the next 15 years. These studies include those undertaken for the Local Development Framework and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. Essex County Council also prepared a profile of the District for the LSP. (These documents can be viewed on the LSP and Maldon District Council websites.) In addition, residents and organisations working in the District were asked what they saw as the priority issues for the area and how we should tackle them. Feedback confirmed that health and wellbeing, improved access to services and facilities including health services, high quality education and training, support for business and jobs, maintaining a low crime rate and tackling anti-social behaviour, providing affordable housing, support for communities to help themselves, recycling, energy efficiency and the environment are all important to those who live and work here.

Identifying priority issues and actions necessarily means that not everything can be included and therefore some issues or actions that have been mentioned do not appear in this document. The Strategy's priorities address those that pose a significant problem for the District and where, although there may be a lead partner, partnership working between agencies is essential.

Geographically the Maldon District consists of seventeen wards. In turn, most of these wards can be broken down into smaller areas referred to as Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs). These have an average of 1,500 people in them. The Sustainable Community Strategy will focus its resources at this local level to ensure better outcomes and continue to refine how it targets its efforts in the future.

### Summary of priority issues

- Health Inequalities
- Older People
- Prosperity (including support for business, skills and education)
- Accessibility
- Affordable Housing
- Supporting Communities
- Natural and Built Heritage

## Priority Issues and Priorities for Action

### 1 Health Inequalities

Health and wellbeing matter to the District because its population will be less productive, less able to take advantage of opportunities and to lead fulfilling lives if this issue is left unaddressed. Health and wellbeing encompasses both physical and mental health.

The widening health inequalities gap between the most and least deprived areas of the District is most simply expressed by the differences in life expectancy: men living in the least deprived areas are likely to live almost 4 years more than men living in the most deprived areas. For women the difference is nearly 3 years.

#### Priority Actions

- Reduce the prevalence of smoking which has been identified as the single biggest cause of inequality in death rates between rich and poor in the UK. Smoking accounts for over half of the difference in risk of premature death between social classes
- Improve poor domestic energy efficiency as away of tackling health inequalities
- Develop and implement a joint commissioning objective related to carers with explicit actions to support young carers
- Promote the uses of green open spaces, physical activity and healthy eating options

#### Target Areas (The 5 most deprived Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) based on the 2007 Indices of Deprivation)

- Beeleigh (Maldon North ward)
- Maldon East (Maldon East ward)
- Colchester Road Area (Heybridge West ward)
- Rural Burnham East (Burnham North ward)
- Southminster North (Southminster ward)

Action for Family Carers have identified high numbers of registered carers in

- Maldon South
- Heybridge East
- Southminster

According to Action for Family Carers, the latter has 19% of all registered young carers in the District while the former two areas have high rates of older carers (over 65 years old).

Every ward in the Maldon District experiences fuel poverty with the highest levels in the following Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs)

- Tillingham (Tillingham ward)
- Hazeleigh, Woodham Mortimer, Woodham Walter, Ulting and Langford (Wickham Bishops and Woodham ward)

#### What will success look like?

- There will be a narrowing of the health inequalities gap between the most deprived and the least deprived people in the district reflected in a stable life expectancy in the least deprived groups and a rising life expectancy amongst the most deprived.

## 2 Older People

The District's ageing population will have huge ramifications for the provision of services particularly in a rural area. A high number of unpaid carers already play a vital part in supporting the older population and those with long term limiting illness and the carers themselves require support in order to protect their own health and to continue to provide care.

### Priority Actions

- Identify and implement ways to provide improved and joined-up/holistic support services for older people with particular attention to housing and care needs and access to services.

### Target Areas

Based on ONS Resident Population Estimates 2007, there are larger numbers of older people (over retirement age) in the following wards:

- Burnham North
- Burnham South
- Maldon North
- Wickham Bishops and Woodham

Action for Family Carers have identified high numbers of registered carers in

- Maldon South
- Heybridge East
- Southminster

According to Action for Family Carers, Southminster has 19% of all registered young carers in the District while the former two areas have high rates of older carers (over 65 years old).

### What will success look like?

- The growing number of older people and their carers in the District are adequately supported

### 3 Prosperity (including support for business, skills and education)

The District's sustainability relies on a diverse and vibrant local economy which helps to reduce social exclusion and poverty, improve health and wellbeing, reduce the need to travel and commute and keep or attract younger people to the District.

In order to deliver growth investment is required to improve the local skills base: working with business, particularly the many smaller businesses that dominate the District, to realise the benefits that a better trained workforce can provide them with; and to raise aspirations among the workforce particularly those young people at risk of becoming NEETS (young people not in education, employment or training). Continued prosperity will rely on the District's businesses and the workforce being sufficiently skilled to take advantage of future opportunities.

#### Priority Actions

- Support business by maintaining and improving business infrastructure including broadband access and speed, distribution networks, etc.
- Encouraging business to engage with innovation and research and development and workforce development to ensure future growth
- Support rural diversification
- Improve skills levels throughout the adult working population
- Helping young people to avoid becoming NEETS

#### Target Areas (The 5 most deprived Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) based on the 2007 Indices of Deprivation)

##### For employment

- Beeleigh (Maldon North ward)
- Colchester Road Area (Heybridge West ward)
- Maldon East (Maldon East ward)
- Rural Burnham East (Burnham north ward)
- South Heybridge East (Heybridge East Ward) + Central Burnham South ( Burnham South ward)

##### For Income

- Beeleigh (Maldon North ward)
- Colchester Road Area (Heybridge West ward)
- Maldon East (Maldon East ward)
- North of the Ward (Maldon South ward)
- Rural Burnham East (Burnham North ward)

##### For Education, Skills and Training

- Colchester Road Area (Heybridge West ward)
- Southminster North (Southminster ward)
- Rural Burnham East (Burnham north ward)
- Maldon East (Maldon East ward)
- Maylandsea (Althorne ward)

#### What will success look like?

- Thriving High Streets and industrial areas
- Improved access to vocational training
- More young people in education, employment or training (low percentage of NEETS)
- An increase in skills levels matched closely to the needs of local business

## 4 Accessibility

Accessibility is about making it easier for people, irrespective of age, disability or other differences, to access work, key facilities and services either by traveling to those services or by bringing those services to them. Access is fundamental to creating sustainable communities and promoting social inclusion, as people need a range of goods, key services and facilities to support their everyday lives. In this rural district which has limited connections by road and rail to other areas, few alternatives to the private car and an ageing population this is a real concern for the future.

### Priority Actions

- Ensure that people know what services already exist (bus services, community transport, internet, mobile services and clinics/surgeries held in village halls, libraries, etc.) and help them to use them
- Work with service providers to better co-ordinate the links between existing and new transport services (e.g. train and bus times with travel to work times)
- Address the adequacy of access to existing services
- Identify and deliver innovative solutions in service delivery including improved broadband connectivity and mobile service provision

### Target Areas

The 5 most deprived Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) based on the 2007 Indices of Deprivation - barriers to housing and services

- Steeple and St Lawrence (Mayland ward)
- Tolleshunt Major and Goldhanger (Tolleshunt D'Arcy ward)
- Great Totham East (Great Totham ward)
- Althorne and Bridgemarsh (Althorne ward)
- North of the ward (Purleigh ward)

### What will success look like?

- Improved opportunities to access services and better information about those opportunities

## 5 Affordable Housing

Access to affordable housing ensures that towns and villages remain sustainable by helping people whose families live in the District to stay near their families and assisting employers to attract and keep workers. Housing is also important for maintaining health and wellbeing.

Survey data on income and savings suggests that 74.5% of newly forming households are considered to be unable to buy in the private market and 67.9% are unable to rent. There is a high demand for property due to the changing demography and migration into the District which has pushed up prices. Despite low mortgage interest rates, high deposits can be an insurmountable problem for those wishing to buy. The needs of an ageing population also have implications for the types of properties that need to be available.

### Priority Actions

- Working to encourage an increase in the supply of affordable housing in the District
- Working across sectors to sustain a more varied housing supply (location, type, size and tenure, the needs of the older population)

### Target Areas

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) indicates that the areas of greatest housing need (75% overall housing requirement by the local preferences) are

- Maldon, Heybridge, Burnham-on-Crouch and Southminster

### What will success look like?

- A more varied housing supply
- An increase in affordable housing

## 6 Supporting Communities

Successful communities have a strong sense of belonging or cohesiveness; they feel able to influence decisions about their area, they feel safe and have opportunities to access community facilities such as post offices, community halls, pubs and village shops and to a wider range of key services and facilities. Engaging people through sports, arts, leisure and cultural activities strengthens communities and helps to reduce problems of anti-social behaviour and exclusion. Supporting communities to help themselves will help to deliver the Big Society.

### Priority Actions

- Maintain low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour
- Encourage and enable people to have a role in shaping their communities including through volunteering

## Target Areas

It is difficult to set out a definitive list of the areas that should be targeted under this priority issue. Targeting will be based on the advice of partner organisations and will vary over time in response to changing circumstances.

## What will success look like?

- A low crime rate and low levels of anti-social behaviour
- Resilient and strong communities
- A thriving Third Sector

## 7 Natural and Built Heritage

Maldon's rich natural and built landscape makes a significant contribution to local people's quality of life and identity. It also forms a valuable resource for tourism, agriculture and improving health. Around 80% of the households in the District are within 5 minutes walk (or 400m) to a green space of at least 1ha in size and people are keen to reduce any detrimental impact on the environment by increasing recycling. The low-lying (over 58%) coastal areas within the District are particularly vulnerable to the effect of coastal changes, including a rise in sea levels, and storm surges.

## Priority Actions

- Conservation and enhancement of the natural environment and the historic and built environment
- Responding to climate change, flooding and promoting sustainability

## Target Areas

According to the District's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2006) the main areas at risk of tidal and fluvial flooding are:

- to the south of Burnham-on-Crouch and Burnham-on-Crouch itself
- North Fambridge
- Heybridge Basin
- the Causeway
- Maylandsea Marina

Essex County Council, in partnership with Maldon District Council, are currently assessing all types of flooding, including groundwater and flooding from ordinary watercourses, to give a more complete picture of all areas at risk. The Sustainable Community Strategy's action plan will be able to take this work into account.

## What will success look like?

- The maintenance of the natural, historic and built environment
- A sustainable approach to flooding risk
- Increased levels of recycling and improved resource (that is energy) management

## Delivering Our Vision

An action plan will be developed in April/May 2011 once the partnership structures, methods of delivery and funding situation have become clearer.

However, the close relationship in particular between the SCS, the Local Development Framework and the Housing and Homelessness Strategies (a shared evidence base, joint consultation and an LSP subgroup acting as the Infrastructure Delivery and Asset Management Group) will underpin the delivery of the spatial components of this Strategy.

All the major partners represented on the LSP's Steering Group will be asked to formally endorse the renewed Sustainable Community Strategy.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out on this Strategy and further work will be carried out when the Action Plan has been completed.

## What will success look like?

A target-driven approach has been deliberately rejected in favour of one that focuses on outcomes. However, it will be necessary to develop interim measures of direction of travel so that the LSP can see whether the actions it is taking are helping to deliver the long term outcomes it is working towards.

Progress against these interim measures will be monitored and reported to the Maldon District Local Strategic Partnership and Maldon District Council as the lead partner within the Partnership.

## Sources

The following documents have been referred to in this document:

Indices of Multiple Deprivation (ONS and Maldon District Council analysis); ONS Population Figures including Sub National Population Projections 2008; The Maldon District Profile (prepared by Essex County Council); the draft Maldon District Council Core Strategy (April 2009); Ward Profiles (Maldon District Council); The Mid Essex Public Health Report 2009-2010; The Association of Public Health Observatories/Department of Health, Health Profile 2010 – Maldon, updated 28 July 2010; The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment; The Strategic Housing Market Assessment March 2010; and the Maldon District Private House Survey 2009-2010.

## Consultations

- Residents' Questionnaire (on-line, through the Courier magazine and face-to-face at community events)
- Stakeholders (organisations working in the District) on-line survey
- Maldon District Business Partnership
- The Third Sector Strategic Partnership

## Contact

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